

## UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

### **DIRECTIONS FOR INFORMAL BRIEFS FOR HABEAS & 2255 APPEALS**

1. **Preparation of Brief.** The Court will consider this case according to the written issues, facts, and arguments presented in the Informal Briefs. The Court will review the Informal Opening Brief in determining whether to grant a certificate of appealability. If a certificate of appealability is granted, the Informal Opening Brief will serve as appellant's opening brief on the merits of the appeal if appellant is proceeding pro se. If appellant is represented by counsel, a formal briefing schedule will be established upon the granting of a certificate of appealability. Space is provided to present up to four issues. Additional issues may be presented by attaching additional sheets. The Court will not consider issues that are not specifically raised in the Informal Briefs. Informal Briefs must be legible and concise, and any attached pages must be sequentially numbered. Informal Briefs may be filed on the form provided or in memorandum or formal briefing format.

2. **Copies required.**

- \* File the original of the Informal Brief with the Court. If you would like a file-stamped copy returned, send an extra copy and a self-addressed stamped envelope. The Court's address is:

Clerk  
U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit  
U.S. Courthouse Annex, 5th Floor  
1100 East Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

- \* Send one copy of the Informal Brief to each of the parties in the case.

3. **Certificate of Service Required.** You must certify that you sent each of the other parties or attorneys complete copies of all documents you send the Court. Service on a party represented by counsel shall be made on counsel.

4. **Signature Required.** You must sign your Informal Brief and all Certificates of Service. If the Informal Opening Brief is not signed, the case will be subject to dismissal under this Court's Local Rule 45.

DOCUMENTS ARE SCANNED INTO ELECTRONIC FORM AND POSTED TO  
THE DOCKET. DO NOT USE STAPLES, TAPE OR BINDING.

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT**

**INFORMAL BRIEF FOR HABEAS AND SECTION 2255 CASES**

**Re:**

**1. Jurisdiction**

A. Name of court from which you are appealing:

B. Date(s) of order or orders you are appealing:

**2. Timeliness of appeal (for prisoners)**

Exact date on which notice of appeal was placed in institution's internal mailing system for mailing to District Court:

**3. Certificate of Appealability**

Did the district court grant a certificate of appealability?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

If Yes, do you want the Court of Appeals to review additional issues that were not certified for review by the district court?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

If Yes, **you must** list below the issues you wish to add to the certificate of appealability issued by the district court. If you do not list additional issues, the Court will limit its review to those issues on which the district court granted the certificate.

**4. Issues on Appeal**

Use the following spaces to set forth the facts and argument in support of the issues you wish the Court to consider on appeal. You must include any issue you wish the Court to consider, regardless of whether the district court granted a certificate of appealability as to that issue. You may cite case law, but citations are not required.

**Issue 1.**

**Supporting Facts and Argument.**

**Issue 2.**

**Supporting Facts and Argument.**

**Issue 3.**

**Supporting Facts and Argument.**

**Issue 4.**

**Supporting Facts and Argument.**

5. **Relief Requested**

Identify the precise action you want the Court of Appeals to take:

6. **Prior appeals (for appellants only)**

A. Have you filed other appeals in this court?

[ ]Yes [ ]No

B. If you checked YES, what are the case names and docket numbers for those appeals and what was the ultimate disposition of each?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

[Notarization Not Required]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Please Print Your Name Here]

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

\*\*\*\*\*

I certify that on \_\_\_\_\_ I served a copy of this Informal Brief on all parties, addressed as shown below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**NO STAPLES, TAPE OR BINDING PLEASE**